

KATE'S FUTURE VIEW OF ICE CREAM



By Michael Perman, C'EST WHAT? LLC

The Plant Based Foods Association reports that U.S. retail sales of plant-based foods continued to increase by double digits in 2020, growing 27 percent and bringing the total plant-based market value to \$7 billion. While meat and milk comprise the lion's share of the category, frozen desserts reached \$435 million in 2020, growing at 20 percent.

Portland-based Kate's Great Plant-based Desserts, makers of [Kate's Ice Cream](#) is becoming a delicious part of the industry transformation. As founder Katelyn Williams says it well: "plant-based foods are not a trend, there is a significant long term shift in behavior happening."

"I think that a lot of people are really learning what plant-based really means. And what I believe that means is that you don't have to be fully plant-based. I was in line at New Seasons recently, and there was a *Good Housekeeping* magazine with a front-page about plant-based living. Everyone is learning more and it's pretty standard knowledge that it is more healthy to eat vegetables, obviously."

Kate started her business from personal experiences. After graduating from LSU in Baton Rouge, she started making ice cream for fun but was taken aback when she learned that her sister needed to be dairy-free and thought: "That is not okay. I can't make ice cream for everyone only to discover not everyone can actually enjoy it?"



Two years of product development later, Kate's brand was born with the knowledge that millions of people are lactose intolerant and others believe in plant-based foods from a sustainability perspective.

Kate seeks broad and mainstream appeal for her brand: "A lot of people love ice cream, it's very nostalgic. They want to enjoy it, and some face the consequences later. I want people to be able to have an amazing ice cream, and still feel pretty good afterward."



Kate's brand is delivered through three strategic platforms:

- Elevate nostalgic flavors
- Create curiosity with new flavor combinations
- Establish values-based brand collaborations

Kate believes in-depth vs. breadth when forming collaborations. "First and foremost, we collaborate and work with local woman and minority-owned businesses. From a community perspective, I enjoy using Kate's platform in order to lift up others in order to be a force for good, which could mean raising money for a local organization or mission that I believe in, and think is aligned with our values. Or, working with a small young business that I can bring awareness to, or also working with someone whose brand aligns with ours, something that's plant-based and gluten-free.

I also want to know who is this founder? They can hit all those buckets, but maybe their values aren't shared with mine. I like to really develop a relationship. I want to hear more about your story. I want to get a feel for your energy, and really make a wise decision if I'm going to partner with you."

OPPORTUNITY FORECAST: KATE'S PERSPECTIVE OF THE FUTURE?

Kate's future plans are to be more of a dessert company. They are currently working on an ice cream toppings line, being able to have like a fully plant-based line of caramel sauces and magic shell from your childhood.

"I want to start making more desserts that are all gluten-free and dairy-free, and becoming a brand that is really known for like, "Cool, Kate's is launching this new brownie mix," or something like that. "I trust it. I know that their standards are, that it's going to be delicious. Texture is going to be great. And I don't feel like I'm sacrificing." I want to start expanding on giving people treats that make them happy."

Kate is also ready to expand into full ice cream shops. "I really want to create these little community hubs. What I'm looking so forward to, is being able to have a space to bring together people, all supporting something that I care about and I believe others care about as well." Message to Kate, keep those delicious flavors and ideas coming!



C'EST WHAT? LLC is an innovation strategy and new product development firm that forecasts emerging opportunities and aligns teams on the best path forward. Our holistic approach is based on the concept of regeneration for people, organizations and communities. C'EST WHAT expertise includes ethnographic insights, foresights, strategy and concept creation.

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